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Assembly President calls on States to advance progress on Security Council reform



General Assembly President Nassir Abdulaziz Al-Nasser

8 November 2011 –

The President of the General Assembly today called on Member States to make headway on the negotiations aimed at making the Security Council a more efficient, transparent, universal, and democratic body.

“Our meeting today is of the utmost importance,” Nassir Abdulaziz Al-Nasser told the 193-member Assembly as it began its consideration of equitable representation and an increase in the membership of the Council. “This issue is central to the reform of the United Nations.”

The 15-member Council currently consists of five permanent members with veto power – China, France, Russia, United Kingdom and United States – and 10 non-permanent members, with no veto, are elected for two-year terms. Some countries have argued that this structure does not represent the realities of today's world.

The intergovernmental negotiations on Council reform have been taking place for 18 years and key issues under discussion are the category of membership, the question of veto, regional representation, the size of an enlarged Council, and the Council's working methods and its relationship with the General Assembly.

Mr. Al-Nasser called on Member States to adopt a "flexible and constructive" approach during the forthcoming round of negotiations, chaired by Ambassador Zahir Tanin of Afghanistan.

"While I have no doubt that there continue to be genuine differences in the positions of different parties regarding various dimensions of the issue, I hope that the discussions during these intergovernmental negotiations will lead to the crystallization of well-defined steps in the reform process," he stated.

"I believe that if genuine progress is made in the reform of the Security Council, it will make a positive contribution towards the increased capacity and effectiveness of the United Nations in responding to global challenges."

Around 56 speakers are expected to participate in the debate which began this afternoon and is expected to continue through tomorrow.

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